

PROPOSED DRAFT CLAIMS FOR
DISCUSSION WITH EXAMINER
- DO NOT ENTER

Application No. 09/852,877
Filed: 5/10/2001
Attorney Docket No.: 23140-1

DRAFT OF PROPOSED AMENDED CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 3, 15 and 28-29 without prejudice and without disclaimer of subject matter.

Please amend Claims 1, 6, 10, 12-14, 20-22, 30 and 32-34 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An information gathering system for capturing a user's vote, the system comprising:
at least one computer;
at least one output device coupled to the computer;
a software component executable by the at least one computer, the software component being arranged to:
assign a unique identifier corresponding to an official ballot;
~~validate the user;~~ and
cause the computer to output on the output device:
a voting stub; and
the official ballot ~~on the output device~~, the official ballot and the voting stub including the unique identifier corresponding to the official ballot, the unique identifier on the voting stub being visible to allow the user to verify the integrity of the user's vote as indicated on the official ballot after the official ballot has been tabulated.

2. (Original) The system according to claim 1, further comprising an input device coupled to the computer wherein the software component is further arranged to read a completed customized ballot from the input device, check the completed customized ballot for errors and to cause the computer to provide output to the output device corresponding to the completed customized ballot.

3. CANCELLED

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4. (Original) The system according to claim 3, further including a forms database accessible by the computer, the forms database including form formatting and content information.

5. (Original) The system according to claim 4, wherein the forms database corresponds to an official ballot forms database.

6. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 3 1, further comprising:

a tabulation database, the tabulation database being accessible by the ~~validated~~ user using the unique identifier randomly generated for the validated user's official ballot.

7. (Original) The system according to claim 6, wherein the tabulation database corresponds to an official vote tabulation database.

8. (Original) The system according to claim 6, wherein the validated user accesses the tabulation database via a communication network.

9. (Previously Amended) The system according to claim 1, wherein a bar code corresponding to the unique identifier is printed on at least one of the voting stub and the official ballot.

10. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 3 1, wherein the unique identifier is a randomly generated number.

11. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 2, wherein the customized ballot is prepared based on at least one of a ~~validated~~ user's address and an allowable language preference.

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12. (Currently Amended) A method of voting, comprising:
~~verifying that the user is eligible to participate by consulting a first database;~~
customizing a ballot by consulting a second database;
requiring ~~the eligible user~~ a voter to provide to the computer a response to the ballot;
producing a first tangible record of the response for retention by the voter, the first tangible record including a unique identifier corresponding to the response and omitting the voter's response to the ballot;
producing a second tangible record of the response, the second tangible record including the voter's response to the ballot;
collecting the second tangible record;
storing the second tangible record; and
using the unique identifier to allow ~~a user~~ the voter to confirm that the second tangible record represents ~~accurate user intent~~ the vote intended to be cast by the voter.

13. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 12, further comprising ~~rejecting users not listed in the first database~~ confirming that the voter's vote was printed on the second tangible record as intended by the voter, wherein the confirmation occurs after the second tangible record is collected.

14. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 13, wherein requiring the ~~verified user~~ voter to provide to the computer a response to the ballot comprises:

inputting the response into the computer;
checking the response by comparing the response to a selected standard;
rejecting the response if the response does not meet the requirements of the selected standard; and
requiring the ~~verified user~~ voter to correct the rejected response.

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16. (Original) The method according to claim 14, wherein the first database is an identification database comprised of user identification information.

17. (Original) The method according to claim 14, wherein the first database corresponds to an official voter registration database.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 14, wherein the first database is comprised of a list of registered voters.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 12, wherein the second database is a forms database, the forms database being comprised of form formatting and content information.

20. (Currently Amended) A method of voting using a computer, the method comprising:

receiving a voter's voting instructions;

printing an official ballot for tabulation and retention by a voting authority, the official ballot including a unique identifier corresponding to the official ballot;

allowing the ~~potential~~ voter to confirm that the printed official ballot represents the voter's voting instructions;

and printing a stub for retention by the voter for subsequent voting verification, the stub including the unique identifier and not including the voter's voting instructions.

21. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 20, further comprising:

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updating a voting results database which includes the unique identifier for each official ballot tabulated;

providing access to the voting results database to the ~~eligible~~ voter; and

requiring the ~~eligible~~ voter to input the unique identifier in order to gain access to the voting results database.

22. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 20, further including customizing a ballot based on a selected criteria by accessing a ballot form database, wherein the selected criteria includes at least one of the ~~eligible~~ voter's address and allowable language preference, the official ballot including the voter's voting instructions based on the customized ballot.

23. (Original) The method according to claim 21, wherein the unique identifier is a randomly generated number.

24. (Original) The method according to claim 20, further comprising receiving language preferences from the voter.

25. (Original) The method according to claim 20, further comprising receiving handicap access preferences from the voter.

26. (Original) The method according to claim 24, further comprising receiving handicap preferences from the voter.

27. (Original) The method according to claim 21, wherein the voting results database corresponds to an official voting results database.

28-29. CANCELLED

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30. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 20, further comprising:

scanning a completed ballot, the completed ballot including voting instructions received from the voter;

comparing the scanned completed ballot with a predetermined standard to detect voter errors;

printing an error report if an error is detected;

printing the official ballot and stub if no errors are detected.

31. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 21, further comprising providing voting instructions to the voter.

32. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, further comprising:

determining eligibility of the voter; and

providing an opportunity to register a first time voter if the ~~potential~~ voter is determined to be eligible.

33. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 30, further comprising:

updating a voting results database with the ballot received from the ~~eligible~~ voter;

providing access to the voting results database to the ~~eligible~~ voter; and

requiring the ~~eligible~~ voter to input the unique identifier in order to gain access to the voting results database.

34. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 31, wherein the unique identifier is printed on the official ballot and voting stub to allow for confidential

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verification of the integrity of the ~~validated~~ user's response without giving the ~~validated~~
user a physical copy of ~~does not include~~ the ~~response~~ user's vote.

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